FIRST
COMICS
LIMITED SERIES
NO. 3 of 3
JULY $1.25
NO. 3
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DYNAMO JOE
™
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Dear Tabby

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL 60610

Surprise! Usually these pages contain letters from you to us. But in this topsy-turvy world you just can't count on everything, and today you get a letter from us to you. And it's being written by me—the publisher. I don't really get the opportunity to talk to you, except at conventions, store appearances and the like, and so...

In your hands is the final issue of the **Dynamo Joe** mini-series. If you'd like it to continue, it is imperative that you let us know. First Comics' number one goal is to serve you. In order to do so, we must hear from you ... we need your criticisms, and we need to know when we're doing right. It's pretty simple—it's supply and demand. If you demand ... we supply.

As you can tell from the credits. **Dynamo Joe** was created and drawn by Doug Rice. Let me tell you a little about him: Doug has been working for the past two years as a production assistant here at First. For about the last three months he was relieved of a good deal of those responsibilities so he could come into the office every day and work on **DJ.** *Now* he has to come into the office everyday and get back to production chores which include photocopying, paste-up and mechanicals, retouching, correcting typographical errors, and cleaning pages for reproduction. Doug's problem is he likes to draw robots. And unless we continue with **Dynamo Joe**—which is up to you—he won't be drawing as many robots as he would like. Personally, I think this was a pretty good series. Do you want another? Let me know.

Okay, enough about your writing to us and letting us know what you want.

If you've been following First Comics over the past three years you've witnessed our growth, our ups and downs, and read quite a few comics. Since it will probably be another three years before I get the opportunity to write directly to you on these pages let me tell you what you can expect in the future from First.

To begin with we're not going to disappear. That you can count on. We will also continue to create and produce comics like **American Flagg!, Jon Sable Freelance, Nexus, Badger** and **Grimjack.** Also, our Graphic Novel line will see increased production in the coming months. In fact, **Howard Chaykin,** creator/writer/artist, will be working on a unique project, in both content and format. It's named **Time²**, and you pronouce it "Time Squared."

Time² will be published as a series of Graphic Novels released on a continued basis approximately twice a year. Each book will be a complete story. Each subsequent novel will continue the original story line, but each will also stand on its own. It is a step beyond **American Flagg!** both in content and format. Now **AF!** was not your usual type of comic when it was first published over two years ago. It took a fair amount of courage for Howard to create it—and for First to publish it. The same applies to **Time²**. And believe me, it will take courage for you to read it. First has always taken risks to break new ground—but we think the results are worth it. You will too.

Another Graphic Novel that we are finalizing this month is **The Enchanted Apples of Oz** by Eric Shanower. Based on L. Frank Baum's Oz characters, this project has everybody at First very excited. It's the one book that everyone here makes the extra effort to produce. Though it's Eric's book—he's writing, pencilling, inking and coloring it—the entire staff of First is putting in extra time on it. Not only to read and appreciate Eric's work, but to help make this a very special graphic novel—it's really becoming something of a company project. Check it out. You'll really understand what creator, writer, artist, separator, printer and First company pride is all about. (Geez, have I gone out on a limb today. But for **Time²** and **Enchanted Apples of Oz** it's justified.)

Before I sign off for the *next* three years, I just want to say thank you for reading our books, and I hope everybody at First continues to keep you satisfied. If we don't, write and let us know. There is one thing that you can count on: if you take the time to write us, we'll take the time to read your comments. And discuss those comments in our management meetings. Believe me, at First *you* come first.

—Rick Obadiah

Rick Obadiah, Publisher

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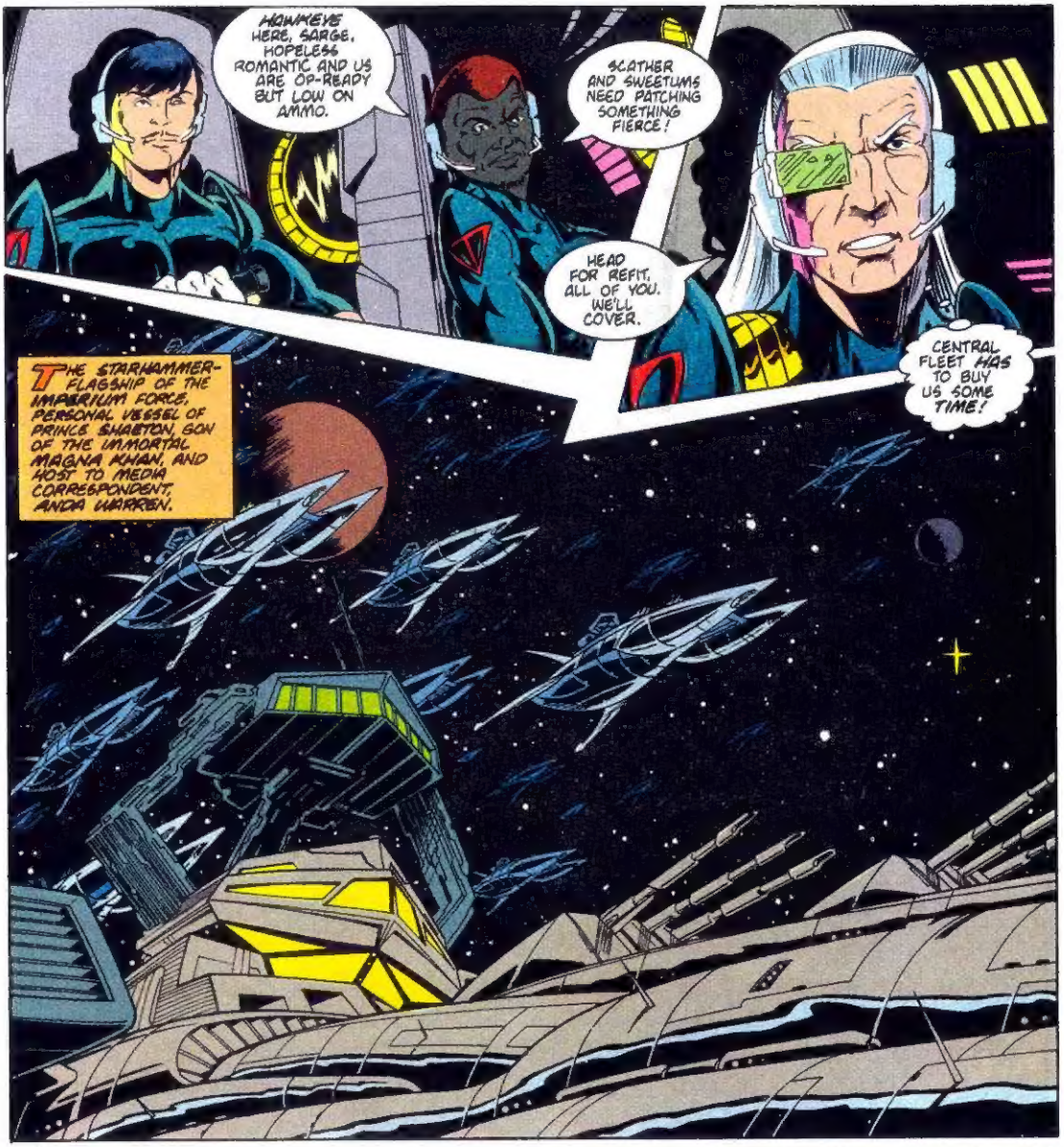
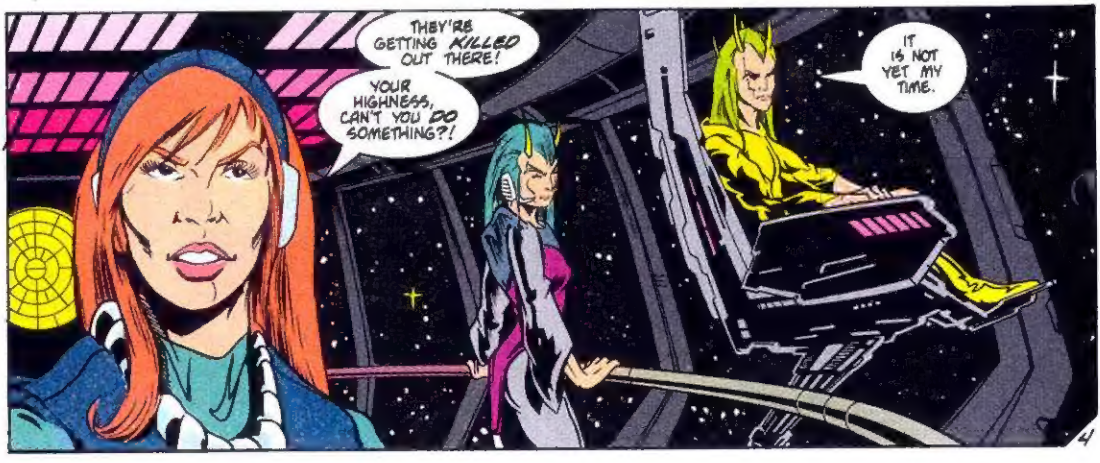
A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

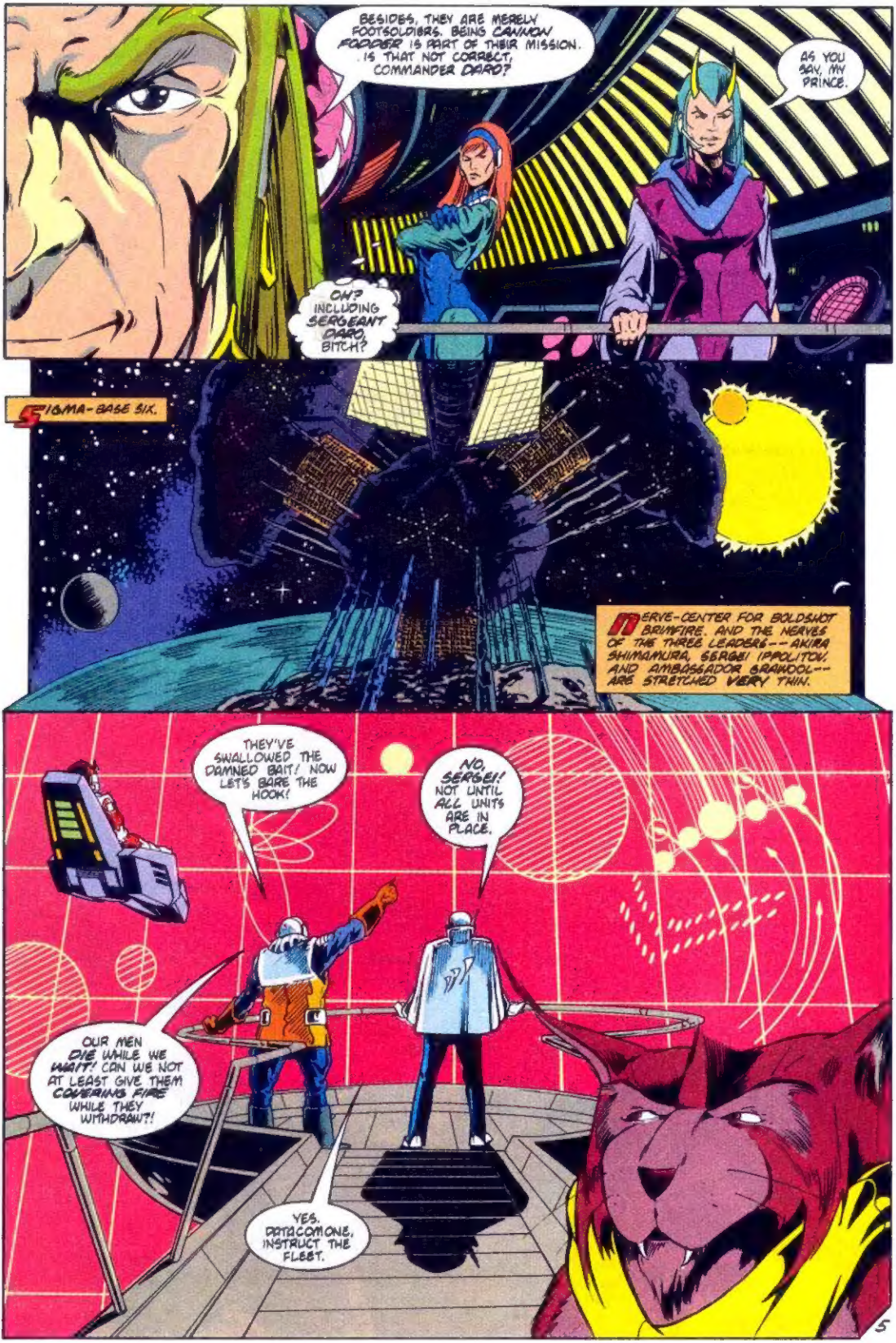
HOLY SHIP, SARGE!
WE GOT SCHNABCRABBERS UP THE ARCH! AND HIGH COMMAND'S PUT IN A GENERAL RECALL!
BOLDSHOT BRIMFIRE'S A BUST!
DynaMO
TM
WE'VE GOT TO GET TANNEMARA AND HER CREW AND WHAT'S LEFT OF OUR ROOKIES BACK TO CENTRAL FLEET.
KICK OUT THE LEAD, SPECTRE SQUAD! BUDDY UP THE DAMAGED UNITS AND PROTECT THE ESCAPE POD FROM THE ORTEN. POMRU AND I'LL COVER YOU!
MOVE!!!

DISASTER!
GOLDSHOT BRIMFIRE WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLE IN THE ORION WAR SINCE THE EXTRA-GALACTIC MELLENARES BEGAN BORING A HOLE THROUGH THE GALAXY, ON A PATH THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY DESTROY THE TAVITAN HOME-PLANET OF LONDREE AND THE CONFEDERATION CAPITAL, TERRA.
IN THE ASHES
DOUG RICE - PENCILLER/ CREATOR JOHN OSTRANDER - WRITER
BRIAN THOMAS & JOHN NYBERG - INKERS
WILLIE SCHUBERT - LETTERER RICK TAYLOR - COLORIST
RICK OLIVER - EDITOR

HAVING LEARNED THE MELLENARES WERE ACTUALLY AMOEBAE-SIZED CREATURES LINKED BY A CORE TO PRODUCE A GROUP MIND, THE HUMANS AND TAVITANS--ALONG WITH A TOKEN FORCE FROM THEIR IMPERIUM ALLIES--PLANNED TO PENETRATE THE MELLENAREN ATTACK FORCE SO THAT BOMB-SHIPS LIKE THE WAHOO CATTEN, FLANKED BY BATTLESUITS LIKE DYNAMO JOE, COULD DESTROY THE CORE AND CRIPPLE THE ALIENS!
THE ATTACK HAS FAILED! ALL THE BOMBS HAVE BEEN DISABLED AND ABANDONED, WHILE THE MELLENARES RUSH FORWARD TO CRUSH THE CENTRAL FLEET AND BREAK THE BACK OF THE ALLIANCE!
REPORT! WHO'S STILL BATTLE READY?


HAWKEYE HERE, SARGE. HOPELESS ROMANTIC AND US ARE OP-READY BUT LOW ON AMMO.
SCATHER AND SWEETUMS NEED PATCHING SOMETHING FIERCE!
HEAD FOR REFIT, ALL OF YOU. WE'LL COVER.
CENTRAL FLEET HAS TO BUY US SOME TIME!
THE STARHAMMER- FLAGSHIP OF THE IMPERIUM FORCE, PERSONAL VESSEL OF PRINCE SHAETON, SON OF THE UNMORTAL MAGNA KHAN, AND HOST TO MEDIA CORRESPONDENT, ANDA WARREN.

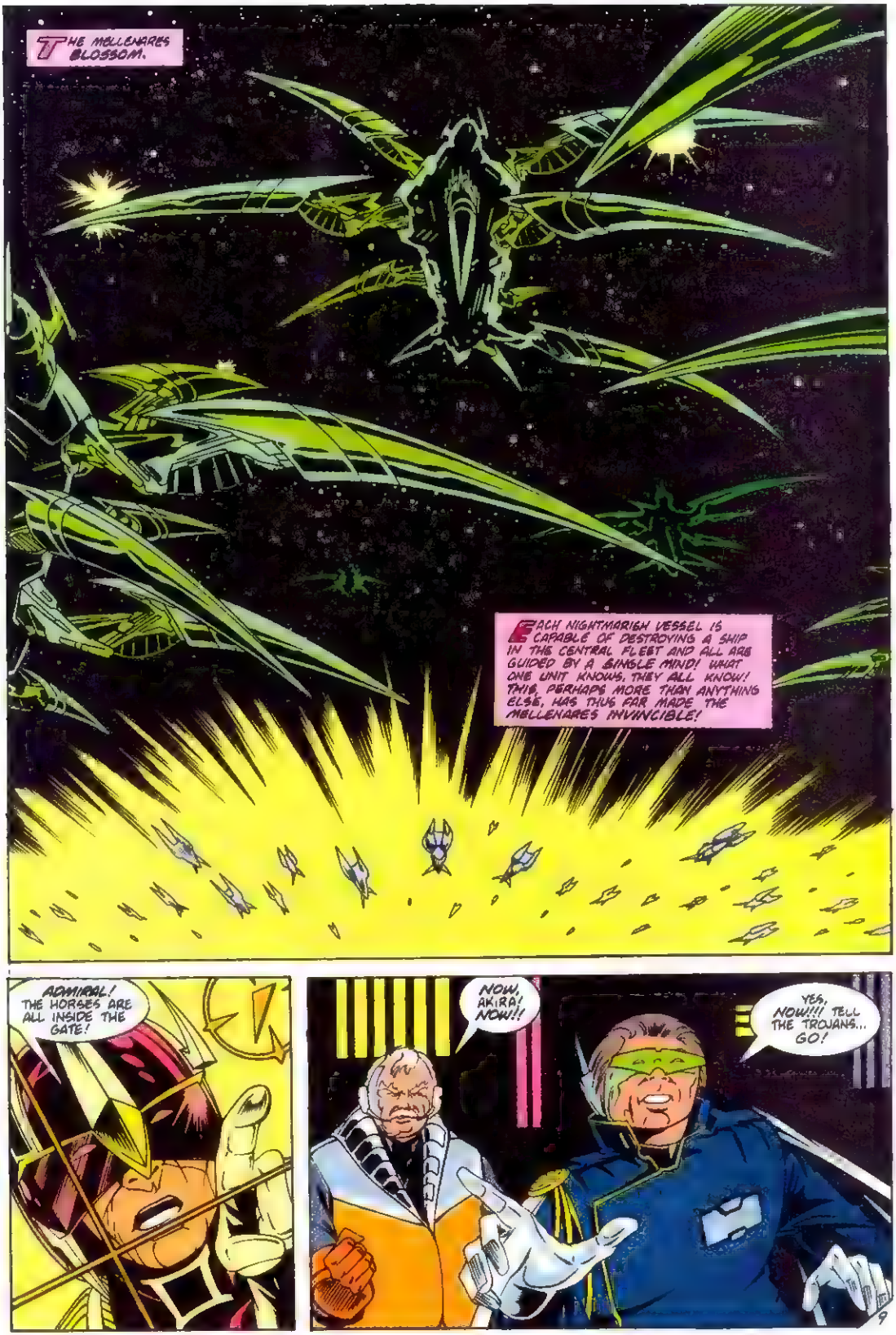

THEY'RE GETTING KILLED OUT THERE!
YOUR HIGHNESS, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING?!
IT IS NOT YET MY TIME.


BESIDES, THEY ARE MERELY FOOTSOLDIERS. BEING CANNON FODDER IS PART OF THEIR MISSION. IS THAT NOT CORRECT, COMMANDER DARO?
AS YOU SAY, MY PRINCE.
OH? INCLUDING SERGEANT DARO, BITCH?
SIGMA-BASE SIX.
NERVE-CENTER FOR BOLDSHOT BRIMFIRE. AND THE NERVES OF THE THREE LEADERS--AKIRA SHIMAMURA, SERGEI IPPOLITOV, AND AMBASSADOR BRAHOOL--ARE STRETCHED VERY THIN.
THEY'VE SWALLOWED THE DAMNED BAIT! NOW LET'S BARE THE HOOK!
NO, SERGEI! NOT UNTIL ALL UNITS ARE IN PLACE.
OUR MEN DIE WHILE WE WAIT! CAN WE NOT AT LEAST GIVE THEM COVERING FIRE WHILE THEY WITHDRAW?!
YES, DATACOM ONE, INSTRUCT THE FLEET.
5

ALL SHIPS, AS UNITS CLEAR...
FIRE!!!
WE'VE GOT A MOMENT'S BREATHING SPACE. HAWKEYE, LEAD THEM INTO MAMA AND ROTATE YOUR TIRES. WE'LL FOLLOW YOU IN. THOSE WHO ARE ABLE BE READY TO ROLL ON MY COMMAND.
TANNEMARA! ARE YOU AND YOUR CREW SAFELY PACKED AWAY?
FEUH! GIVE US ONE OF YOUR UNITS AND WE WILL SHOW YOU SOMETHING OF FIGHTING, IMPIE!
IT IS NOT SAFETY WE SEEK! IT IS BATTLE!
MAYBE SOMETIME WE CAN OBLIGE YOU. DARO OUT!
Ftth!

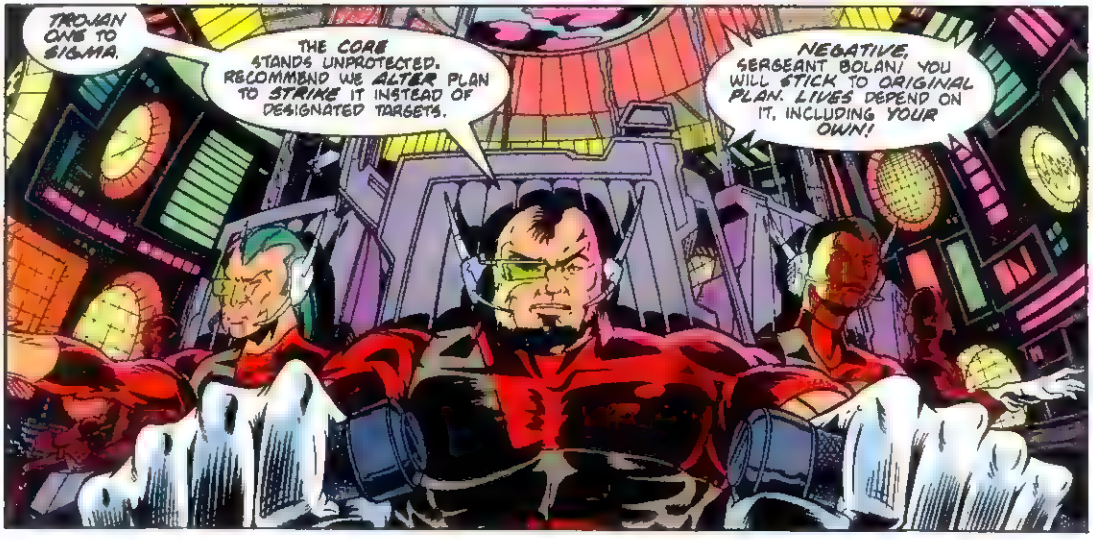
DYNAMO JOE FOLLOWS THE REMNANTS OF THE SPECTRE SQUAD INTO THE PIT STOP, A MELD OF MECHANIC AND AUTOMATED SYSTEMS DESIGNED TO GET THE BATTLESUIT BACK INTO ACTION QUICKLY.
THE STANDARD JOKE AMONG DYNAMO PILOTS IS THEY LIKE TO GET INTO BATTLE AS A BREAK FROM THE INTENSITY OF THE PIT STOP CREWS!
HAVE THEM DOUBLESHOT THE PLASMA TANK, POMRU.
ROGER-DOKEY, SARGE. YA THINK MAYBE WE COULD GET A TECHIE T'TAKE THE BURR OUTA OUR COMMANDER'S PANTS?
PRIVATE, YOU ARE AWARE THAT THE COMLINK TO HER IS STILL ACTIVE, AREN'T YOU?
OOK!
AND I AM NOT SUSCEPTIBLE TO FLATTERY, PRIVATE.
STILL, THEY FIGHT WELL. YET, THE FORCES THEY REPRESENT AND MY PEOPLE-- THE CHEYENNE NATIONS-- ARE SO AT ODDS WITH ONE ANOTHER, I SEEM INCAPABLE OF PRAISING THEM. A FAULT IN ME.
ALIEN TO ONE ANOTHER, CAN WE EVER TRULY UNITE TO FIGHT A FOE ALIEN TO US ALL?

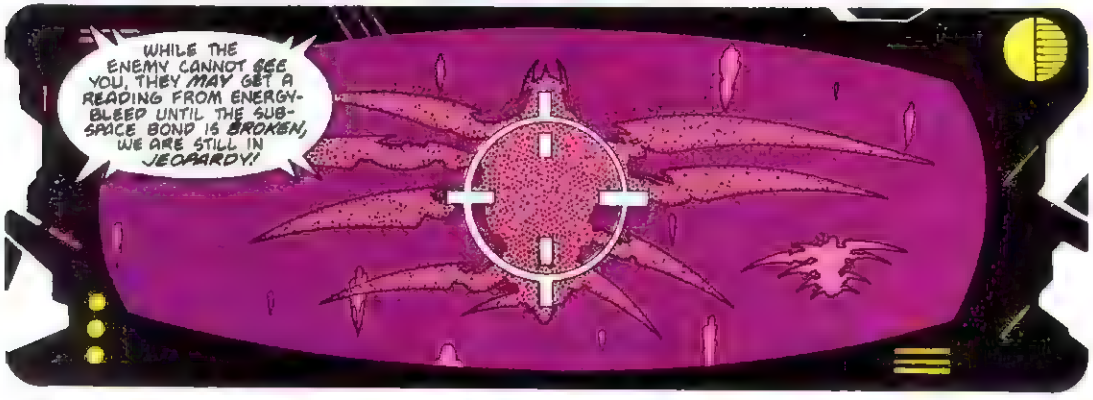
KAETO SAYS WE CAN FIELD FOUR UNITS TO GO BACK OUT. HALF OF WHAT WE HAD. AND WE SEEM TO BE ONE OF THE LUCKIER UNITS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HIGH COMMAND EVER BELIEVED THE BOMB-SHIPS WOULD GET THROUGH, POMRU. SO WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE LATEST REPORT, DATACOMONE? WHAT IS GOING ON?
THE MELLENAREN BATTLE FORCE HAS VECTORED 10 DEGREES TO BRING THEMSELVES SQUARELY AGAINST THE MIDDLE OF THE CENTRAL FLEET.
THEY HAVE CLOSED TO POINT. ONE PARSEC AND ARE BEGINNING TO "BLOSSOM."
AKIRA, IF WE DO NOT ACT SOON WE MAY LOSE THE FLEET. THE ASHES OF DEFEAT ARE VERY BITTER TO TASTE, MY FRIEND.
IN THE ASHES OF DEFEAT MAY LIE THE PEARL OF VICTORY, SERGEI. THE DIFFERENCE NOW LIES IN SECONDS!


THE MELLENARES BLOSSOM.
EACH NIGHTMARISH VESSEL IS CAPABLE OF DESTROYING A SHIP IN THE CENTRAL FLEET AND ALL ARE GUIDED BY A SINGLE MIND! WHAT ONE UNIT KNOWS, THEY ALL KNOW! THIS, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, HAS THUS FAR MADE THE MELLENARES INVINCIBLE!
ADMIRAL! THE HORSES ARE ALL INSIDE THE GATE!
NOW, AKIRA! NOW!!
YES, NOW!!! TELL THE TROJANS... GO!

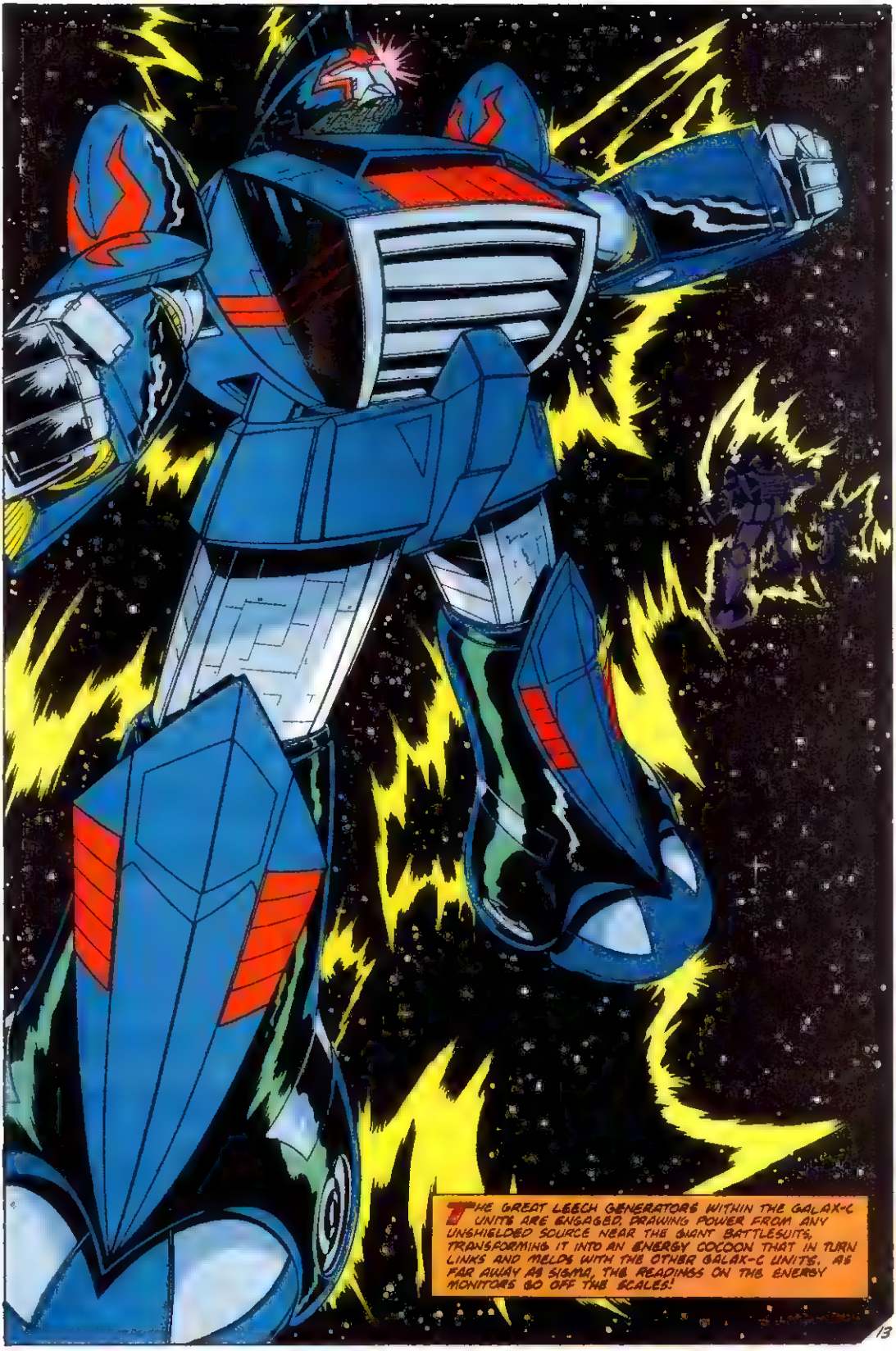
THE WAHOO ORTEN AND THE OTHER "BOMBSHIPS"...ALL ADRIFT IN SPACE. DISABLED, SEEMINGLY DEAD, IGNORED BY THE MELLENARES IN THEIR EAGERNESS TO ATTACK THE LIVING, THEY NOW FLOAT BETWEEN THE ATTACK FORCE AND THE MELLENAREH CORE.

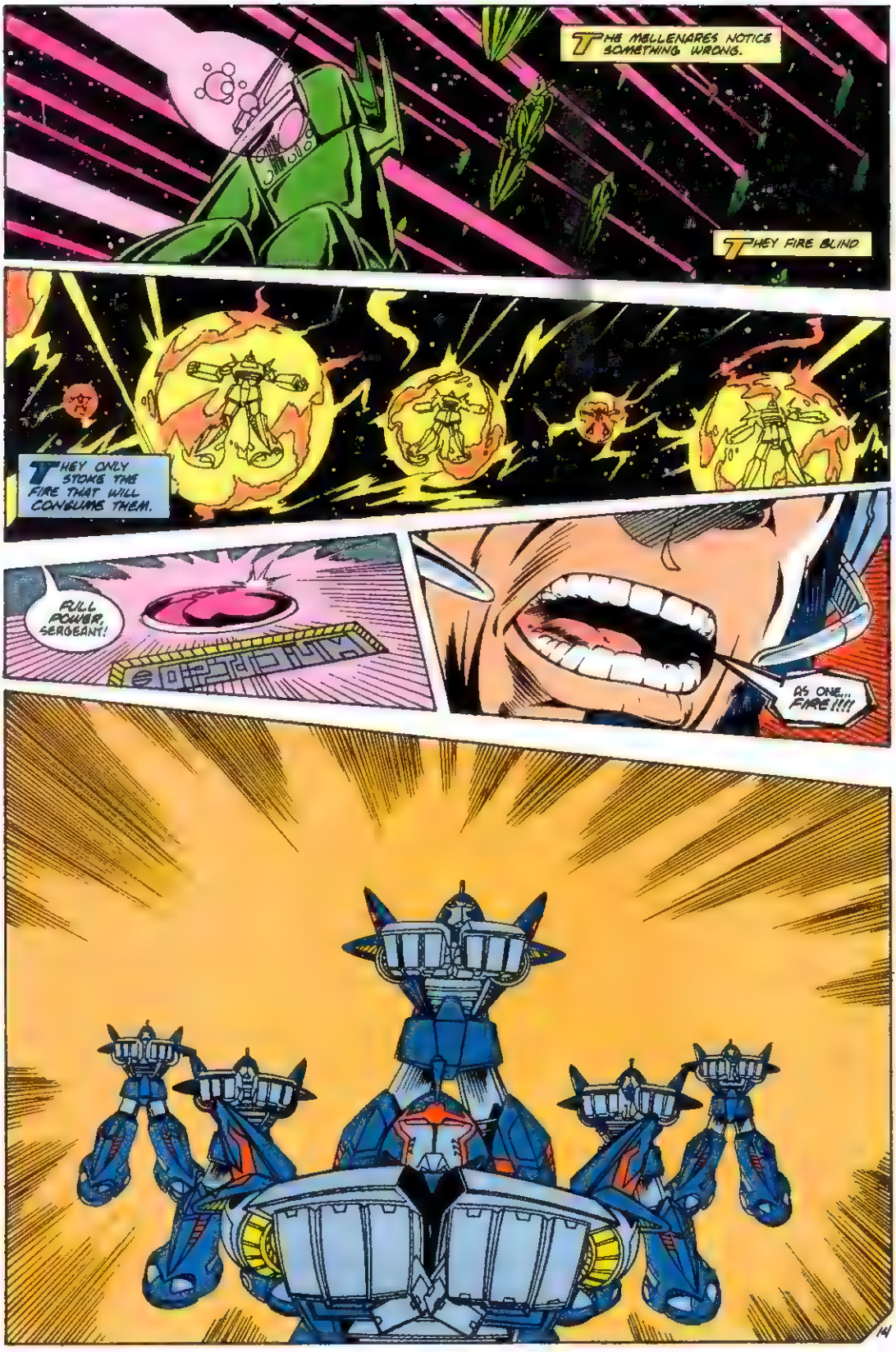
FROM THE WRECKAGE OF THE CARTEN, IT RISES--THE GALAX-C SUPER-ROBOT, SHIELDED FROM THE MELLENARES PSIONIC PROBE BY A NEW TAVITRN GENERATOR THAT CREATES THE EQUIVALENT OF THE MIND-NEUTRAL STATE!*
THE MELLENARES USE THEIR ENEMIES' EYES TO "SEE" BUT CANNOT "READ" THE MIND-NEUTRAL STATE, CREATING A BLIND-SPOT IN THEIR VISION. THE GENERATOR NOT ONLY MAKES THE GALAX-C EFFECTIVELY INVISIBLE TO THE MELLENARES, IT CAN ALSO DISRUPT THE SUB-SPACE BOND THAT UNITES THE INDIVIDUAL CELLS TO THE CORE MIND!
*DISCOVERED BY ANDA WARREN IN FIRST ADVENTURES #5-RAO.
TROJAN SQUADRON! RISE AND REPORT!
AND ONE BY ONE...
...THE NEW TROJANS...
...EMERGE!

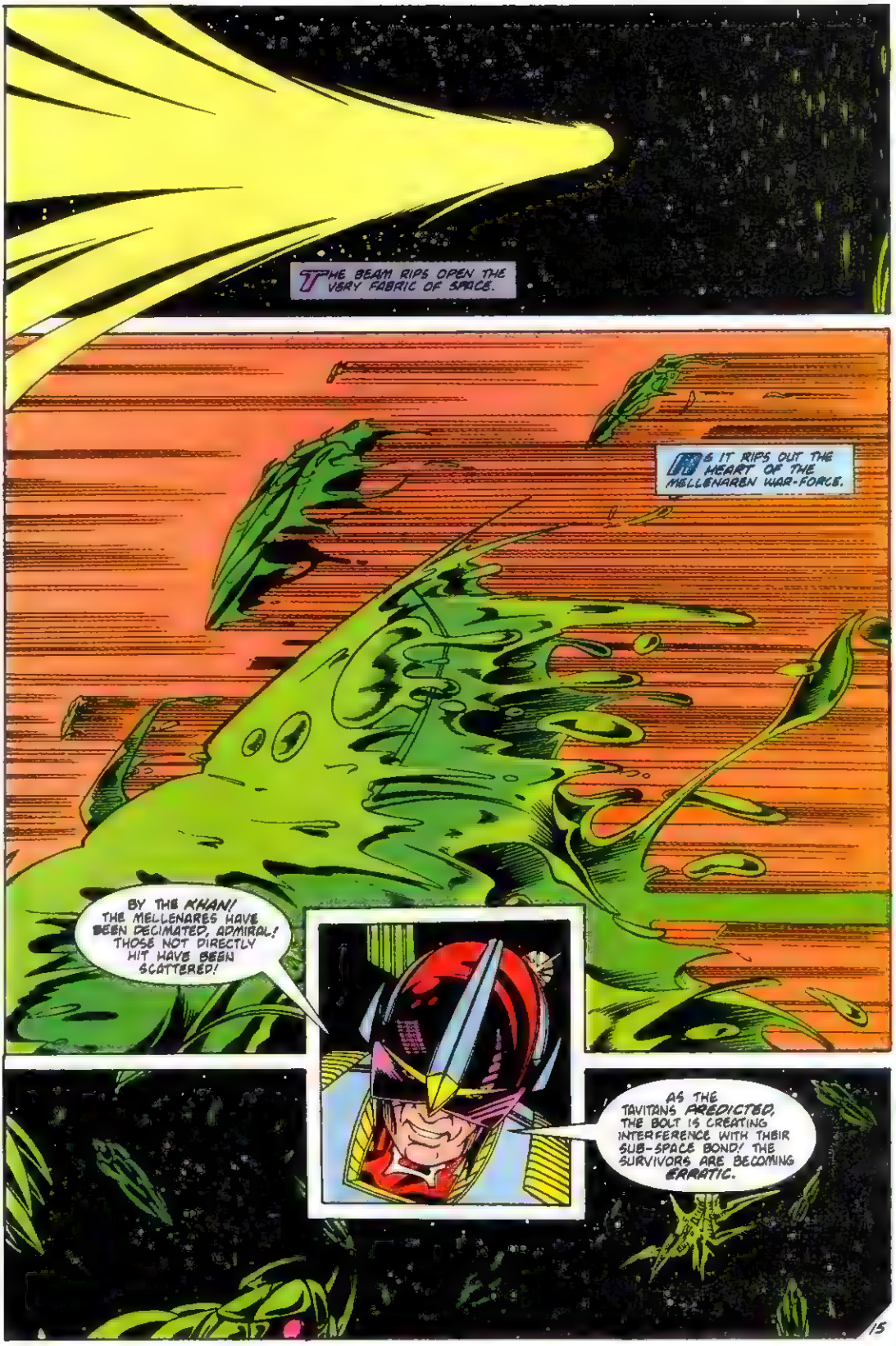

TROJAN ONE TO SIGMA.
THE CORE STANDS UNPROTECTED. RECOMMEND WE ALTER PLAN TO STRIKE IT INSTEAD OF DESIGNATED TARGETS.
NEGATIVE, SERGEANT BOLAN! YOU WILL STICK TO ORIGINAL PLAN. LIVES DEPEND ON IT, INCLUDING YOUR OWN!


WHILE THE ENEMY CANNOT SEE YOU, THEY MAY GET A READING FROM ENERGY-BLEED UNTIL THE SUB-SPACE BOND IS BROKEN. WE ARE STILL IN JEOPARDY!

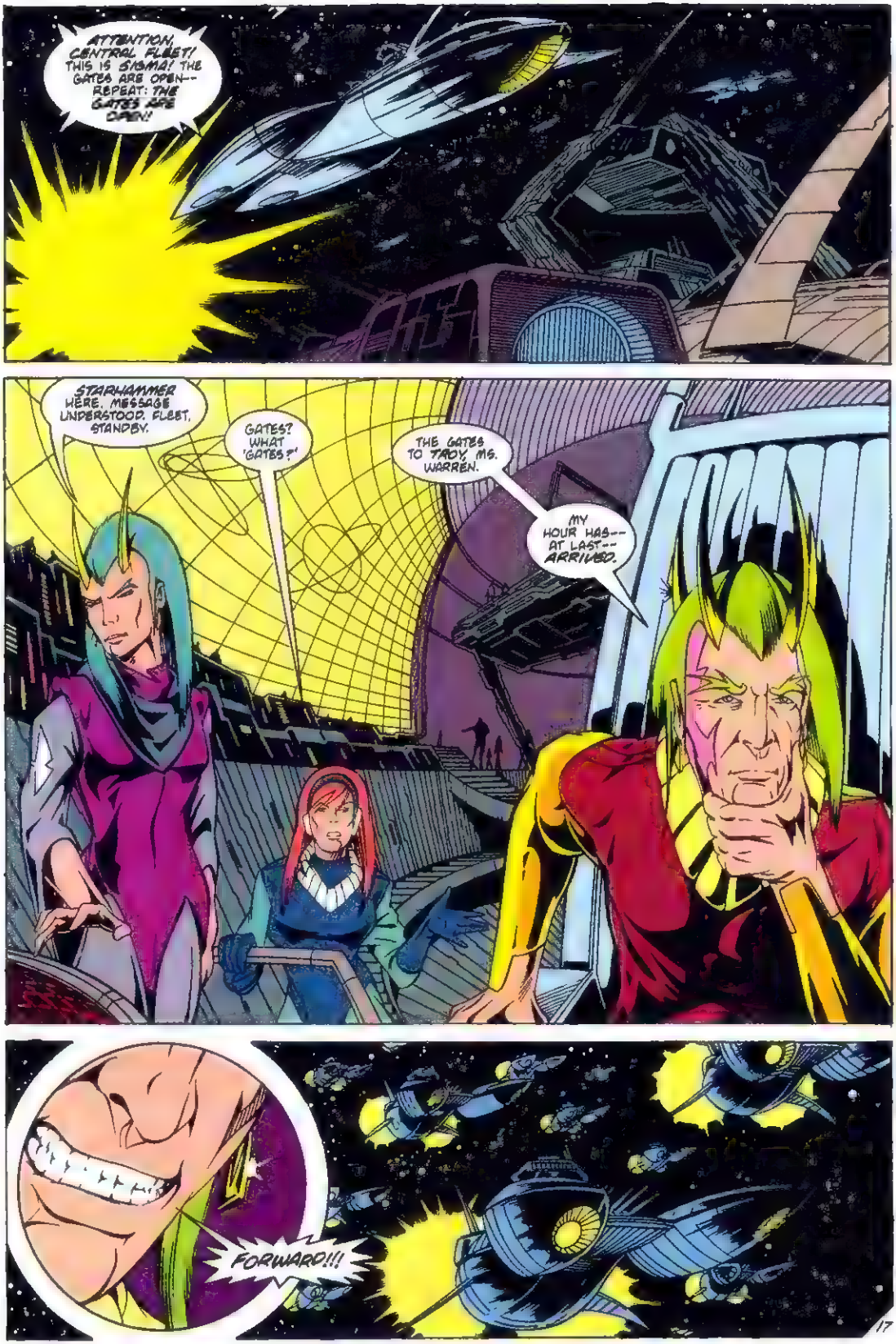
OUR READINGS INDICATE THEY ARE STARTING TO TURN TO INVESTIGATE. YOUR PRINCE INQUIRES IF YOU ARE WAITING FOR RE-ASSIGNMENT?!
TO HEAR IS TO OBEY.
TROJANS... POWER UP!

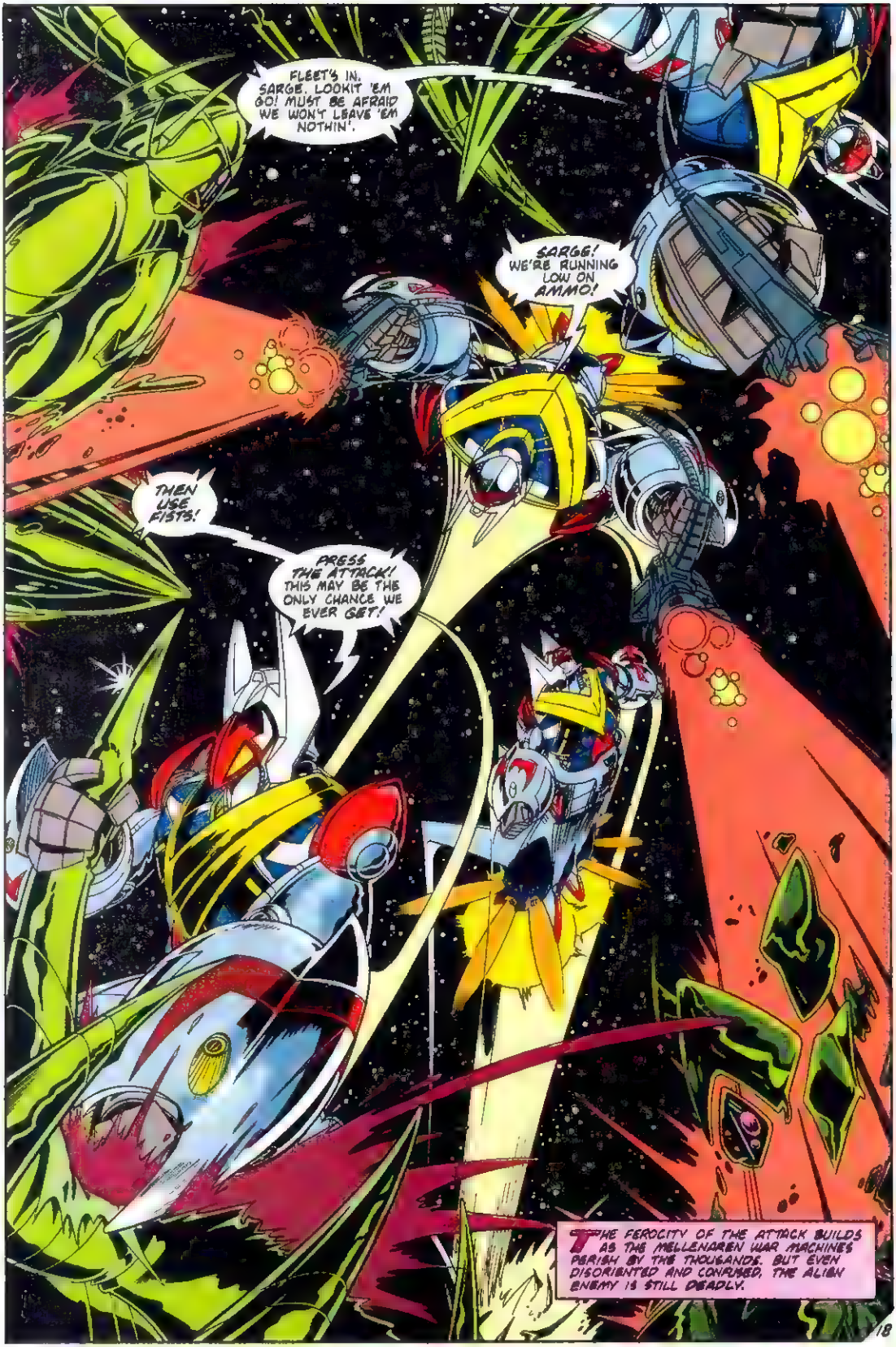

THE GREAT LEECH GENERATORS WITHIN THE GALAX-C UNITS ARE ENGAGED, DRAWING POWER FROM ANY UNSHIELDED SOURCE NEAR THE GIANT BATTLESUITS, TRANSFORMING IT INTO AN ENERGY COCOON THAT IN TURN LINKS AND MELDS WITH THE OTHER GALAX-C UNITS. AS FAR AWAY AS SIGMA, THE READINGS ON THE ENERGY MONITORS GO OFF THE SCALES!

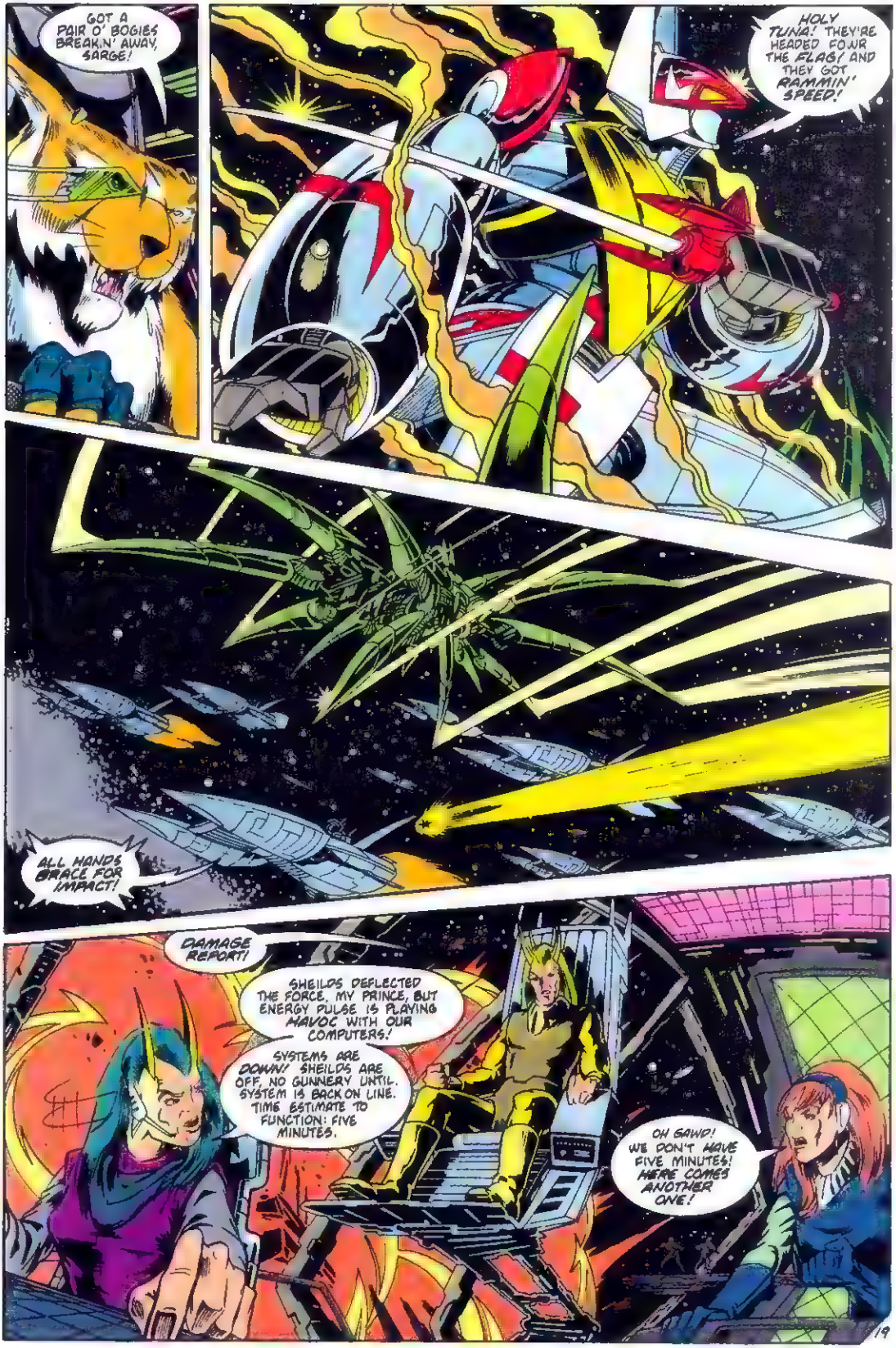

THE MELLENARES NOTICE SOMETHING WRONG.
THEY FIRE BLIND.
THEY ONLY STOKE THE FIRE THAT WILL CONSUME THEM.
FULL POWER, SERGEANT!
AS ONE... FIRE!!!!

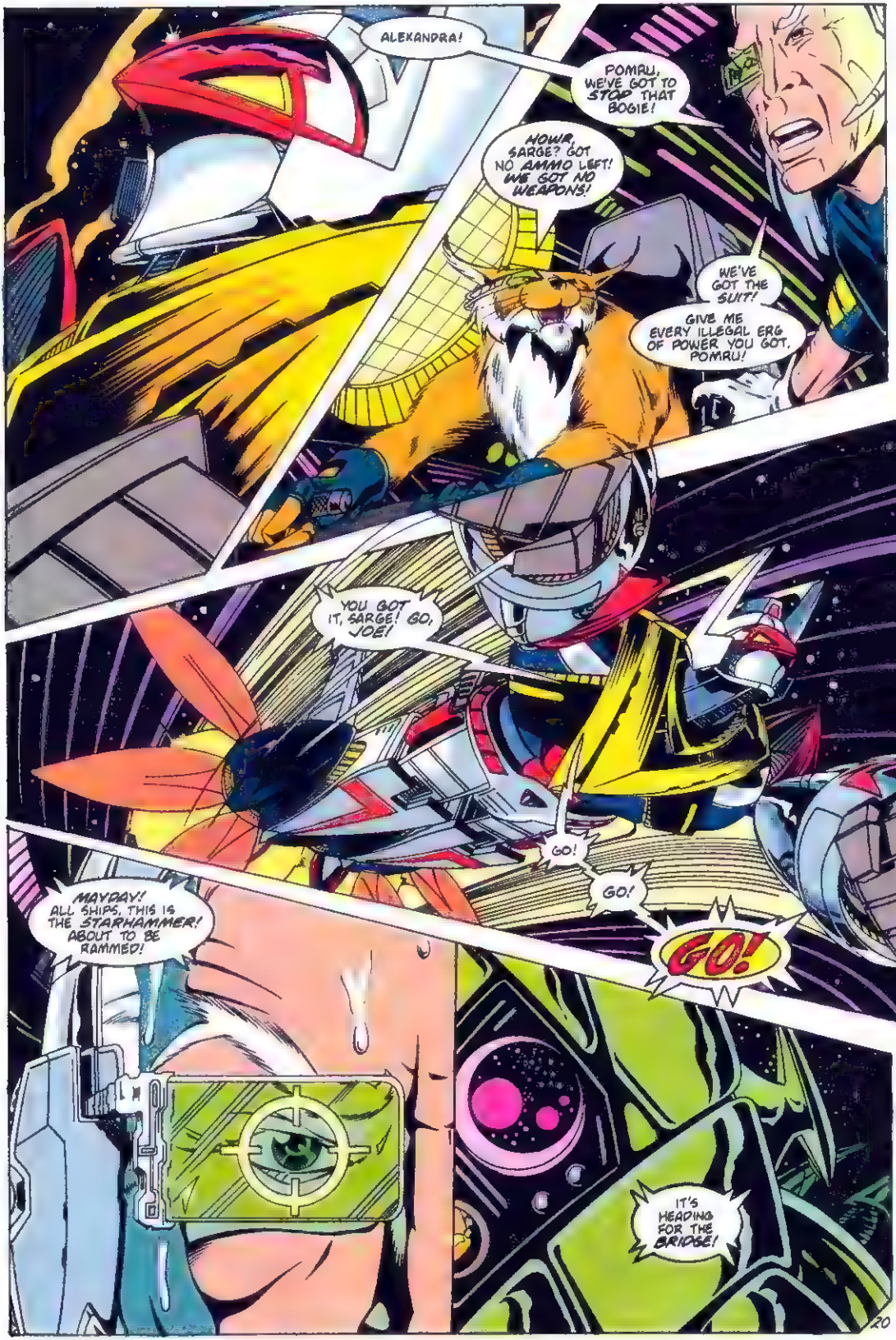

THE BEAM RIPS OPEN THE VERY FABRIC OF SPACE.
AS IT RIPS OUT THE HEART OF THE MELLENAREN WAR-FORCE.
BY THE K'HAN! THE MELLENARES HAVE BEEN DECIMATED, ADMIRAL! THOSE NOT DIRECTLY HIT HAVE BEEN SCATTERED!
AS THE TAVITANS PREDICTED, THE BOLT IS CREATING INTERFERENCE WITH THEIR SUB-SPACE BOND! THE SURVIVORS ARE BECOMING ERRATIC.

"SARGE, LOOK! THE SCHNABBRABBERS HAVE GONE NUTSO! THEY'RE EATIN' EACH OTHER!"
OORO! SIGMA HAS GIVEN THE WORD, AND IT IS BATTLE!
STRIKE NOW!
SPECTRA SQUADRON! BATTLE FORMATION!

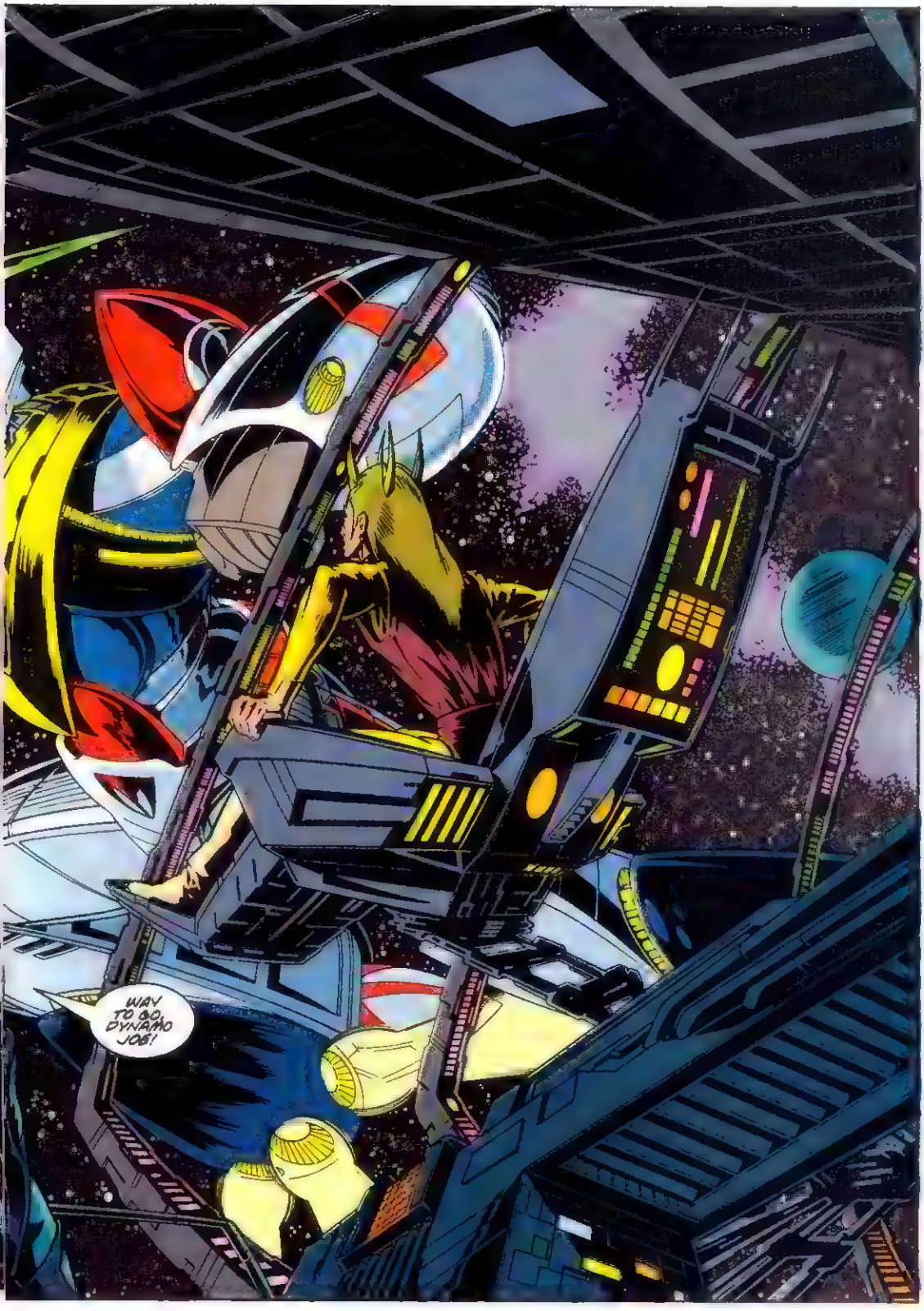

ATTENTION, CENTRAL FLEET! THIS IS SIGMA! THE GATES ARE OPEN-- REPEAT: THE GATES ARE OPEN!!
STARHAMMER HERE. MESSAGE UNDERSTOOD. FLEET, STANDBY.
GATES? WHAT 'GATES?'
THE GATES TO TROY, MS. WARREN.
MY HOUR HAS-- AT LAST-- ARRIVED.
FORWARD!!!

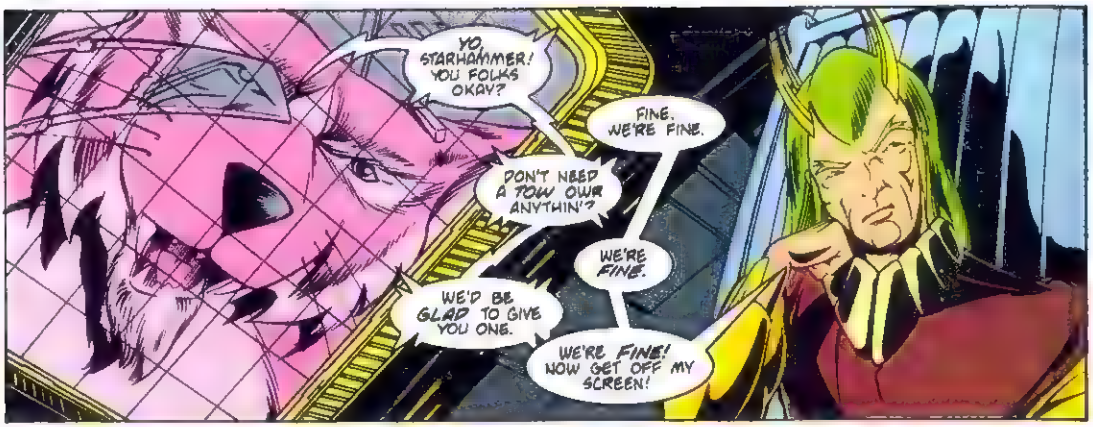

FLEET'S IN, SARGE. LOOKIT 'EM GO! MUST BE AFRAID WE WON'T LEAVE 'EM NOTHIN'.
SARGE! WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON AMMO!
THEN USE FISTS!
PRESS THE ATTACK! THIS MAY BE THE ONLY CHANCE WE EVER GET!
THE FEROCITY OF THE ATTACK BUILDS AS THE MELLENIAREN WAR MACHINES PERISH BY THE THOUSANDS. BUT EVEN DISORIENTED AND CONFUSED, THE ALIEN ENEMY IS STILL DEADLY.

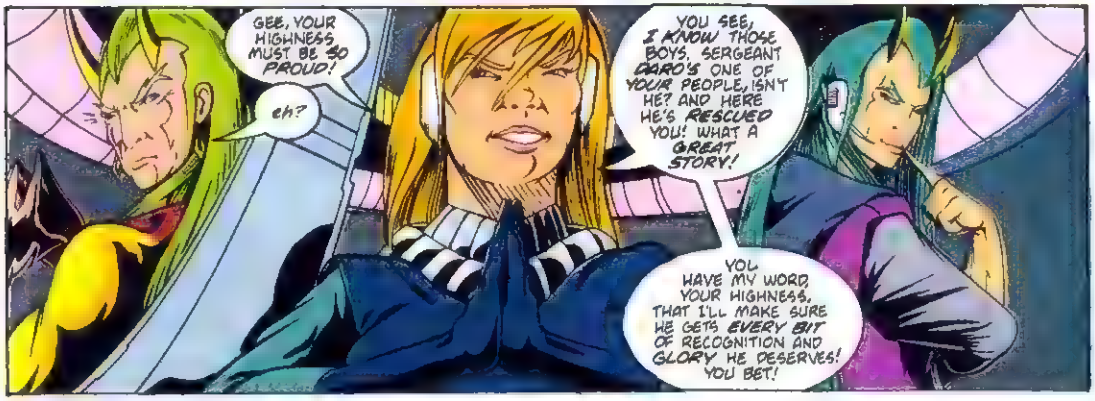

GOT A PAIR O' BOGIES BREAK'N' AWAY, SARGE!
HOLY TUNA! THEY'RE HEADED FOUR THE FLAG! AND THEY GOT RAMMIN' SPEED!
ALL HANDS BRACE FOR IMPACT!
DAMAGE REPORT!
SHEILDS DEFLECTED THE FORCE, MY PRINCE, BUT ENERGY PULSE IS PLAYING HAVOC WITH OUR COMPUTERS!
SYSTEMS ARE DOWN! SHEILDS ARE OFF. NO GUNNERY UNTIL SYSTEM IS BACK ON LINE. TIME ESTIMATE TO FUNCTION: FIVE MINUTES.
OH GAWD! WE DON'T HAVE FIVE MINUTES! HERE COMES ANOTHER ONE!

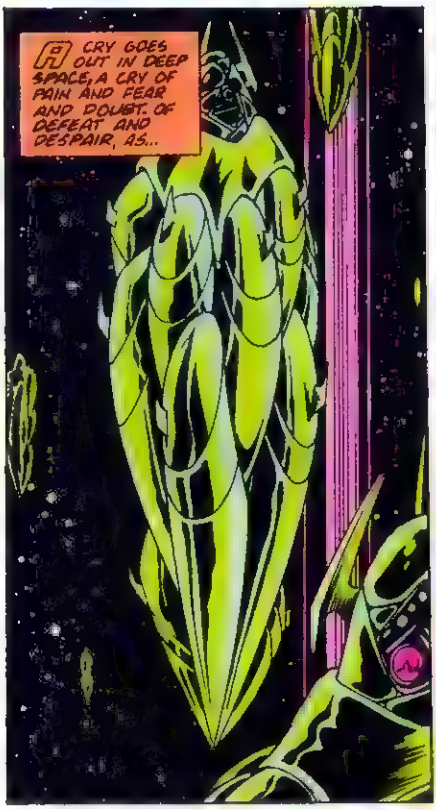

ALEKANDRA!
POMRU, WE'VE GOT TO STOP THAT BOGIE!
WOWR, SARGE? GOT NO AMMO LEFT! WE GOT NO WEAPONS!
WE'VE GOT THE SUIT!
GIVE ME EVERY ILLEGAL ERG OF POWER YOU GOT, POMRU!
YOU GOT IT, SARGE! GO, JOE!
GO!
GO!
GO!
MAYDAY! ALL SHIPS, THIS IS THE STARHAMMER! ABOUT TO BE RAMMED!
IT'S HEADING FOR THE BRIDGE!

BY THE KHAN!
HEY, I KNOW THAT BOT!


WAY TO GO, DYNAMO JOE!


YO, STARHAMMER! YOU FOLKS OKAY?
FINE. WE'RE FINE.
DON'T NEED A TOW OUR ANYTHIN'?
WE'RE FINE.
WE'D BE GLAD TO GIVE YOU ONE.
WE'RE FINE! NOW GET OFF MY SCREEN!

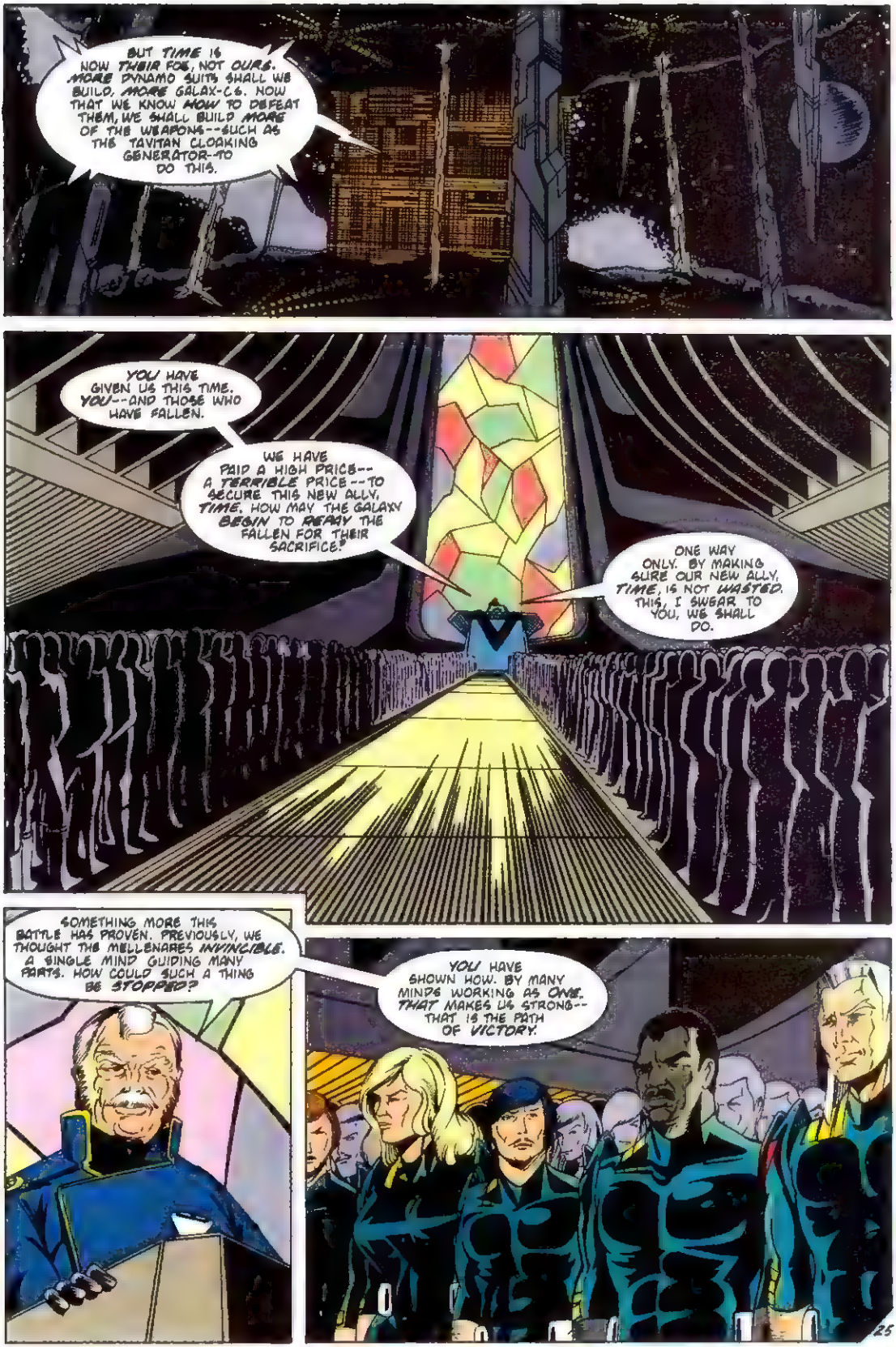

GEE, YOUR HIGHNESS MUST BE SO PROUD!
eh?
YOU SEE, I KNOW THOSE BOYS. SERGEANT GARO'S ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE, ISN'T HE? AND HERE HE'S RESCUED YOU! WHAT A GREAT STORY!
YOU HAVE MY WORD, YOUR HIGHNESS, THAT I'LL MAKE SURE HE GETS EVERY BIT OF RECOGNITION AND GLORY HE DESERVES!
YOU BET!


A CRY GOES OUT IN DEEP SPACE, A CRY OF PAIN AND FEAR AND DOUBT. OF DEFEAT AND DESPAIR, AS...

...FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE ORION WAR BEGAN...

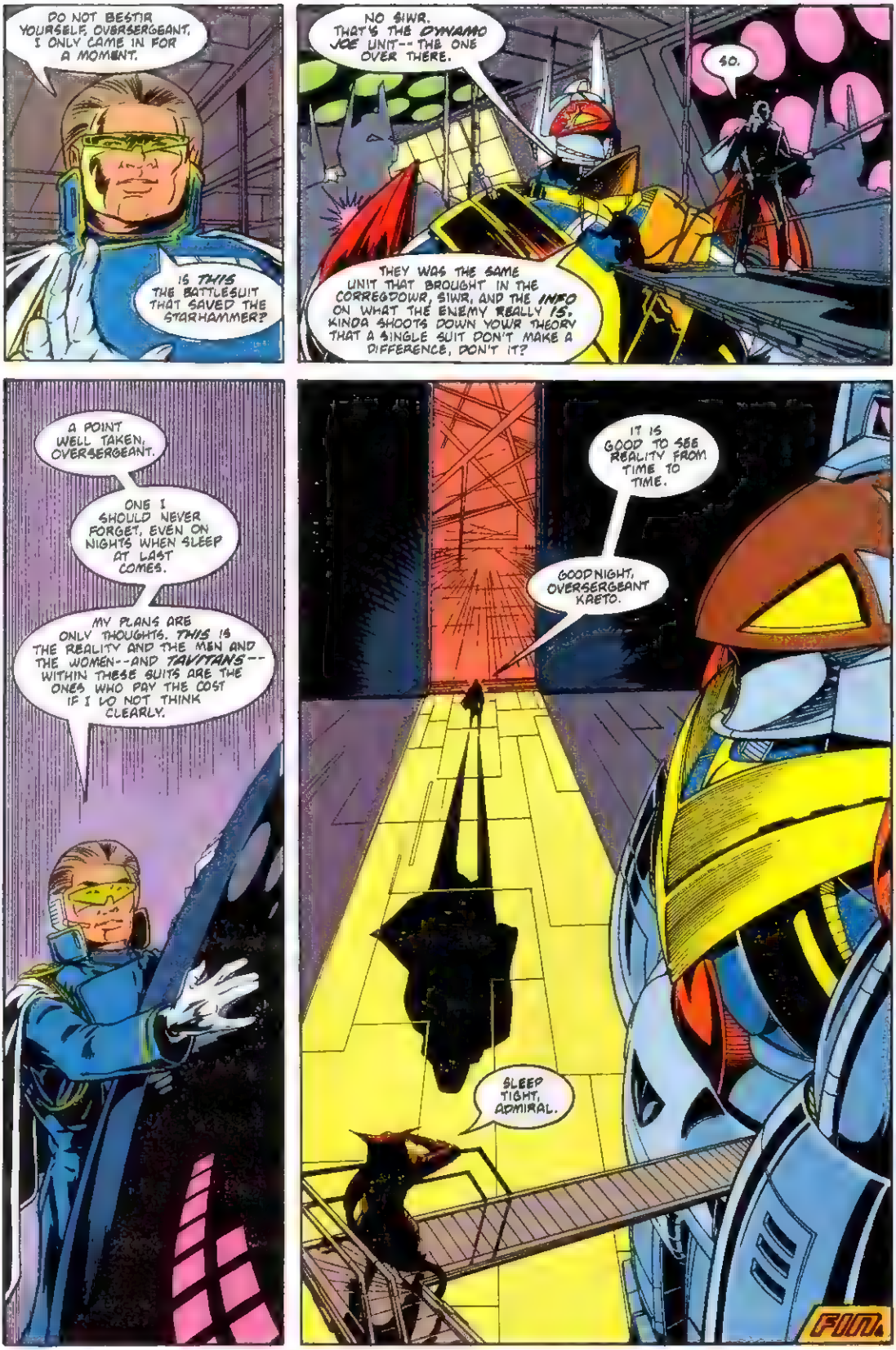
..THE ENEMY RETREATS.

IT HAS GONE WELL. DATACOMONS, RECALL OUR PEOPLE.
ARE YOU MAD? PURSUE THEM, AKIRA!
FOR THE PRICE WE HAVE PAID IN BLOOD, IT IS HEINOUS NOT TO END IT, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
GIVEN OUR LOSSES, SERGEI, WE WOULD ONLY MAKE AN END TO OURSELVES!
BETTER TO MARSHAL OUR FORCES ANEW. WE HAVE STOPPED THEM, SERGEI. FROM THIS POINT ON, TIME SERVES US NOT THEM.
IT IS TIME TO REBUILD AND REJOICE IN WHAT WE HAVE DONE. COME.
NINETY-SIX HOURS AFTER VICTORY.
WE HAVE WON A BATTLE, DA. BUT THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES. WE HAVE DRIVEN THEM BACK-- NOW WE MUST CONTAIN THEM.


BUT TIME IS NOW THEIR FOE, NOT OURS. MORE DYNAMO SUITS SHALL WE BUILD, MORE GALAX-C'S. NOW THAT WE KNOW HOW TO DEFEAT THEM, WE SHALL BUILD MORE OF THE WEAPONS--SUCH AS THE TAVITAN CLOAKING GENERATOR--TO DO THIS.
YOU HAVE GIVEN US THIS TIME. YOU--AND THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN.
WE HAVE PAID A HIGH PRICE-- A TERRIBLE PRICE--TO SECURE THIS NEW ALLY, TIME. HOW MAY THE GALAXY BEGIN TO REPAY THE FALLEN FOR THEIR SACRIFICE?
ONE WAY ONLY. BY MAKING SURE OUR NEW ALLY, TIME, IS NOT WASTED. THIS, I SWEAR TO YOU, WE SHALL DO.
SOMETHING MORE THIS BATTLE HAS PROVEN. PREVIOUSLY, WE THOUGHT THE MELLENARES INVINCIBLE. A SINGLE MIND GUIDING MANY PARTS. HOW COULD SUCH A THING BE STOPPED?
YOU HAVE SHOWN HOW. BY MANY MINDS WORKING AS ONE. THAT MAKES US STRONG-- THAT IS THE PATH OF VICTORY.

POMPOUS OLD WINDBAG! GAWD! I THOUGHT I'D DROWN IN THE CROCODILE TEARS!
YOU'RE JUST A BUNCH OF NUMBERS TO HIM! PAWNS TO CARRY OUT THEIR STRATEGIES! YOU DIE WHILE THEY GET THE GLORY, I SWEAR, IT MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE!
A LITTLE OVERSTATED, DON'T YOU THINK, MS. WARREN?
BUT SARGE! THEY DID USE US! THEY LIED!
TOLD US OUR MISSION WAS DO OR DIE! TIME, AND IT WAS ALL A BUNCH OF CARPOLA. THEY EXPECTED US T'FAIL! THEIR WHOLE PLAN WAS BASED ON IT!
WHAT ELSE COULD THEY DO, POMRU? THE MELLENARES COULD READ OUR MINDS. THE HIGH COMMAND DIDN'T HAVE THE GENERATORS TO SHIELD US LIKE THEY DID THE GALAK-CS AND THE BIG SHIPS.
THE MELLENARES HAD TO BELIEVE WE WERE ON THE VERGE OF DEFEAT, SO THEY WOULD PRESS THEIR ATTACK AND LET THE GALAK-CS GET BETWEEN THE CORE AND THE WAR MACHINES. HIGH COMMAND TOOK OUR SINGLE BIGGEST WEAKNESS AND MADE IT WORK FOR US! SEE?
I GUESS. DON'T LIKE IT, THOUGH.
I STILL THINK IT SUCKS DYNAMO EGGS. HOW CAN THERE BE ANY TRUST BETWEEN ANY TWO GROUPS .. OR PEOPLE... IF ONE SIDE CONCEALS SOMETHING FROM THE OTHER? HM, SARGE?
NO ONE IS A HUNDRED PERCENT ON THAT SCORE, GIRLY!
PLEASANT COMPANY INCLUDED!
WELL SAID, POMRU
ALEXANDRA!

ELANIAN!
GEE, NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MRS. DARO!
'MRS. DARO?' WOOHOO, SPACE-FOWR-BRAINS! ARE YOU BARKING UP THE WRONG MAYPOLE!
ALEXANDRA AIN'T THE SARGE'S WIFE!
THAT'S HIS BIG SISTER!
WAAhoohahohhh HEEEE!
..HIS BIG, ?!
OGAWD! I'M GONNA DIE!
ST-DECK
STILL WORKING, OVERSERGEANT? WHY DO YOU NOT JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS?
AWR, THEM'S FOWR KITS! 'SIDES, IF THIS SUIT'S NEEDED TOMORROW AND IT AIN'T READY, WHO'S GONNA EXPLAIN IT TO THE BRASS, BUDDY? YOU?
OUR PLANS RARELY DEPEND ON THE CONDITION OF A SINGLE SUIT, OVERSERGEANT.
WHO,.. WOWR!
ADMIRAL SHIMAMURA!


DO NOT BESTIR YOURSELF, OVERSERGEANT, I ONLY CAME IN FOR A MOMENT.
IS THIS THE BATTLESUIT THAT SAVED THE STARHAMMER?
NO SIWR. THAT'S THE DYNAMO JOE UNIT--THE ONE OVER THERE.
SO.
THEY WAS THE SAME UNIT THAT BROUGHT IN THE CORREGDOWR, SIWR, AND THE INFO ON WHAT THE ENEMY REALLY IS. KINDA SHOOTS DOWN YOUR THEORY THAT A SINGLE SUIT DON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE, DON'T IT?
A POINT WELL TAKEN, OVERSERGEANT.
ONE I SHOULD NEVER FORGET, EVEN ON NIGHTS WHEN SLEEP AT LAST COMES.
MY PLANS ARE ONLY THOUGHTS. THIS IS THE REALITY AND THE MEN AND THE WOMEN--AND TAVITANS--WITHIN THESE SUITS ARE THE ONES WHO PAY THE COST IF I DO NOT THINK CLEARLY.
IT IS GOOD TO SEE REALITY FROM TIME TO TIME.
GOODNIGHT, OVERSERGEANT KRETO.
SLEEP TIGHT, ADMIRAL.
FIN.

FIRST NOTES

ONWARD...

Some of you may have noticed over the past few months that there is a different person writing this column. Some of you may have even wondered why. And some of you don't even bother to read it; so you can nip out to the kitchen and make a sandwich or take a quick nap or just turn the page while I tell everybody else what's *really* going on.

Mike Gold, one of the founders of First Comics -- and the guy that used to fill up this page with words, leaving me time to do important thinks like make sandwiches and take naps -- decided it was time to move on... to Connecticut. After several vain attempts to commute back and forth every day, it occurred to him that there were several whoppingly large comics companies considerably closer to his new home, and that one of them just *might* be interested in an editor of his high caliber. Unfortunately, the only opening he could find was Senior Editor at DC Comics. He took the job anyway, figuring there was always room for advancement. After all, he was already president of First Comics, a position which earned him the whoppingly large salary of absolutely nothing. But president of Warner Communications... that's another story entirely.

All kidding aside, goodbye and good luck, Mike.

...AND UPWARD

Kathy Kotsivas, one of our first employees, has been promoted to Operations Director. This is a very complex job involving virtually every aspect of the company's activities. In fact, it's far too complex to explain here. Suffice it to say that when Kathy gets sick, none of us get our paychecks -- which makes her far more important than the publisher, as far as I'm concerned.

Rick Taylor, originally hired to fill our mandatory quota of Ricks, has actually turned out to be a more than marginally efficient worker; so we heaped more and more stuff on him and finally decided to promote him to production manager -- since he had already been doing most of the things one would expect from a production manager for several months. You know how the phone company just doesn't seem to provide reliable service anymore? That all started when Rick quit AT&T to come work for us.

Jade Stolarz hasn't been promoted to anything yet because we just hired her. But give her a few weeks, and she'll probably have *my* job. In the meantime, she'll be working in the art department with the aforementioned Rick Taylor and our art director, **Alex Wald**.

Laurel Fitch hasn't been promoted to anything either because we promoted her to editorial coordinator a couple of months ago. We've just given her more work to do, like editing more books to take some of the load off me.

And speaking of me -- something I'm fond of doing -- I've been promoted to editorial director, a mighty important sounding title which I made up myself. Who am I? You'll just have to wait until the end of the column.

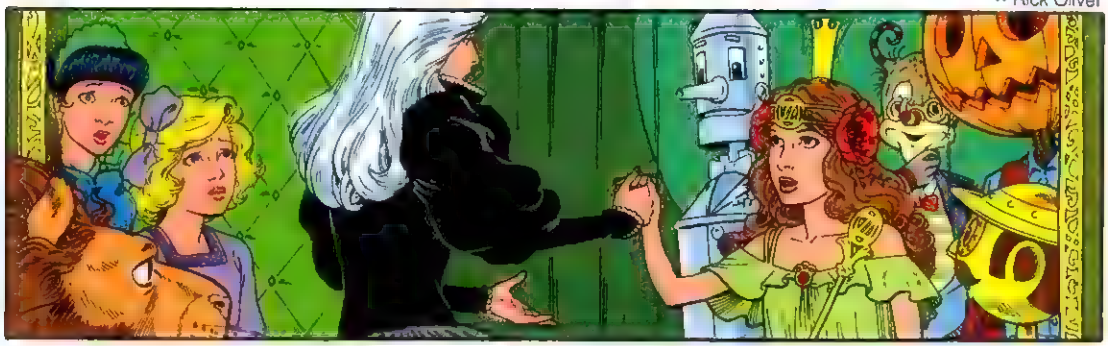
FIRST IN APRIL

I dropped a large hint last month about a new graphic novel coming your way in April and promised I'd say more about it this month. Lucky for you, my promotion didn't go to my head -- yet -- and I'll keep my promise even though I'M THE EDITOR, AND I CAN DO ANYTHING I WANT!

The graphic novel is called **The Enchanted Apples of Oz**, and it's the first in a series of completely original stories based on characters and concepts from **L. Frank Baum's** classic Oz books. It is the creation of **Eric Shanower** who is doing virtually everything but printing the book himself. Eric is writing, penciling, inking, lettering, and coloring the entire book. An Oz fan since the age of nine, 22 year old Eric is already an accomplished comics professional. He was the regular inker on **Nexus** through issue #16 and handled all the art chores on **Nexus** #17, while **Steve Rude** took a brief respite.

The Enchanted Apples of Oz will be a 48 page graphic novel, with full-color reproduction on high-quality coated paper. And somewhere in this comic you'll find a full-page ad that will show just what Eric can do.

-- Rick Oliver



FIRST IN MARCH

Dynamo Joe #3: The concluding chapter in our three-part limited series pits the Dynamo-class robo-soldiers against the mysterious "Enemy" in the most critical battle of the Orion War! By **Doug Rice, John Ostrander, Brian Thomas,** and **John Nyberg**.

Hawkmoon: Jewel in the Skull #2: The second installment in our four-part adaptation of **Michael Moorcock's** first Hawkmoon novel. Adaptation by **Gerry Conway, Rafael Kayanan,** and **Rico Rival**.

Alter Ego #2: Teenage Rob Lindsay finds he must avert a nuclear war in the superhero guise of Alter Ego. By **Roy Thomas** and **Ron Harris**.

Badger #13: Judah Maccabee makes a guest appearance in Barneveld for a team-up with the Badger. By **Mike Baron, Bill Reinhold,** and **Keith Wilson**. Plus: Zoomtown by Baron, **Ron Wagner**, and **Gary Martin**.

Grimjack #24: A special second anniversary issue featuring an all-new Grimjack story by creators **John Ostrander** and **Timothy Truman**, a reprint of the very first Grimjack story, and an extra special Munden's Bar by **Steven Grant** and **Paul Smith**!

Jon Sable, Freelance #37: Sable returns to Africa to search for a hidden ivory treasure. Story and art by **Mike Grell**.

American Flagg! #31: A new Flagg! adventure begins with the new creative team of **Howard Chaykin, Steven Grant, Mark Badger**, and **Randy Emberlin**. Plus: The origin of Bob Violence by **Steven Grant, Joe Staton**, and **Hilary Barta**.

Nexus #22: The further adventures of Nexus, Judah and the Badger in the mysterious bowl-shaped world. A special fill-in issue courtesy of Nexus co-creator **Mike Baron** and guest artists **Keith Giffen** and **Rick Bryant**

AN INTERSECTION OF THE INFINITE - WHERE ETERNITY MEETS FOREVER...
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ONE WAY
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CHEVROLET
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SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!
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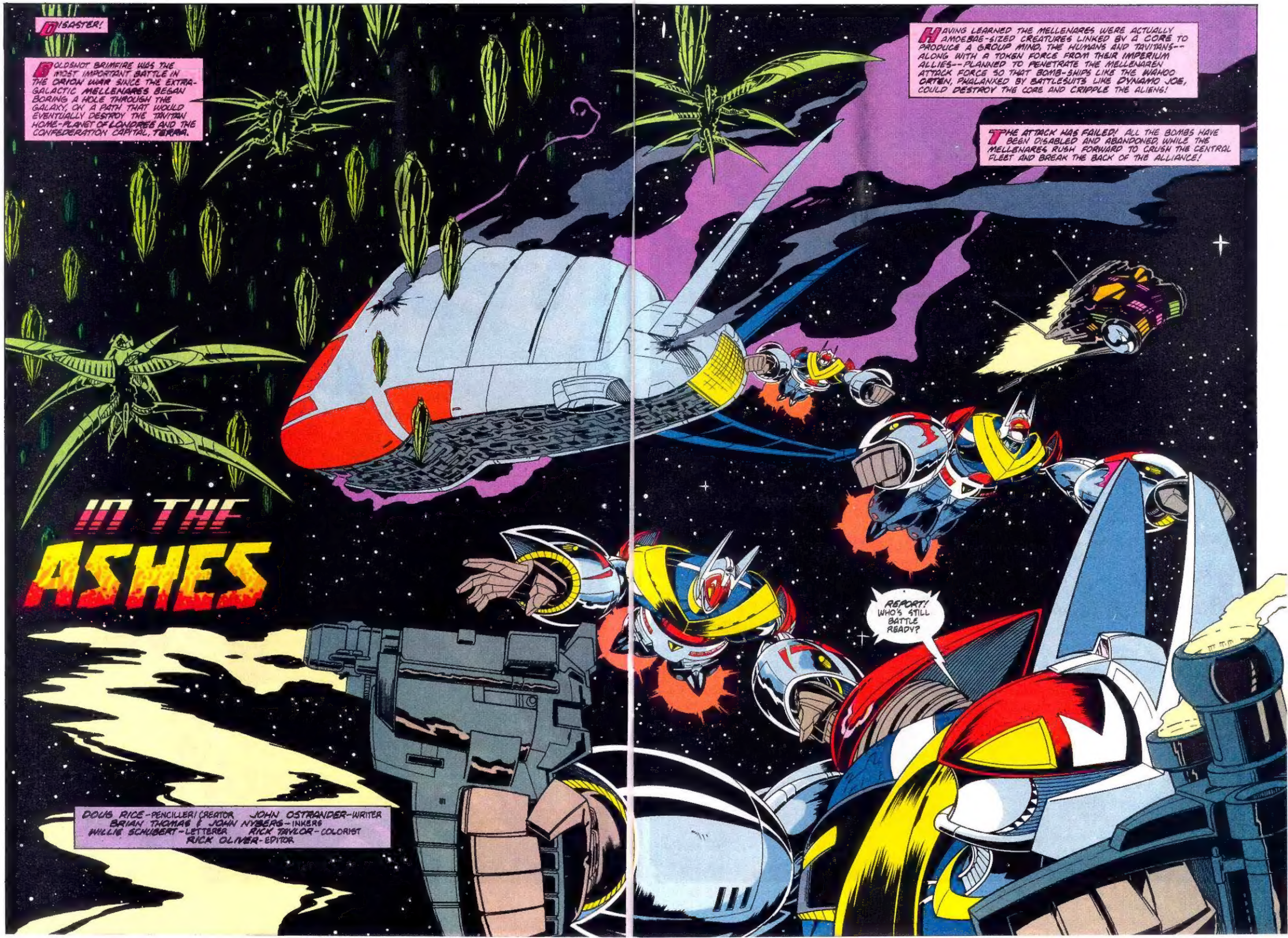
You're all invited to
Grimjack's birthday party!
Hosted by: Timothy Truman
Paul Smith
John Ostrander
Steven Grant
Grimjack #24
On sale in March
FIRST COMICS


DISASTER!
BOLDSHOT BRIMEIRE WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLE IN THE ORION WAR SINCE THE EXTRA-GALACTIC MELLENARES BEGAN BORING A HOLE THROUGH THE GALAXY, ON A PATH THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY DESTROY THE TAVITAN HOME-PLANET OF LOMDRES AND THE CONFEDERATION CAPITAL, TERRA.
IN THE ASHES
DOUG RICE - PENCILLER/ CREATOR JOHN OSTRANDER - WRITER
BRIAN THOMAS & JOHN NYBERG - INKERS
WILLIE SCHUBERT - LETTERER RICK TAYLOR - COLORIST
RICK OLIVER - EDITOR
HAVING LEARNED THE MELLENARES WERE ACTUALLY AMOEBAE-SIZED CREATURES LINKED BY A CORE TO PRODUCE A GROUP MIND, THE HUMANS AND TAVITANS-- ALONG WITH A TOKEN FORCE FROM THEIR IMPERIUM ALLIES-- PLANNED TO PENETRATE THE MELLENAREN ATTACK FORCE SO THAT BOMB-SHIPS LIKE THE WAHOO CARTEN, PHALANXED BY BATTLESUITS LIKE DYNAMO JOE, COULD DESTROY THE CORE AND CRIPPLE THE ALIENS!
THE ATTACK HAS FAILED! ALL THE BOMBS HAVE BEEN DISABLED AND ABANDONED, WHILE THE MELLENARES RUSH FORWARD TO CRUSH THE CENTRAL FLEET AND BREAK THE BACK OF THE ALLIANCE!
REPORT! WHO'S STILL BATTLE READY?

BY THE KHAN!
HEY, I KNOW THAT BOT!
WAY TO GO, DYNAMO JOE!